

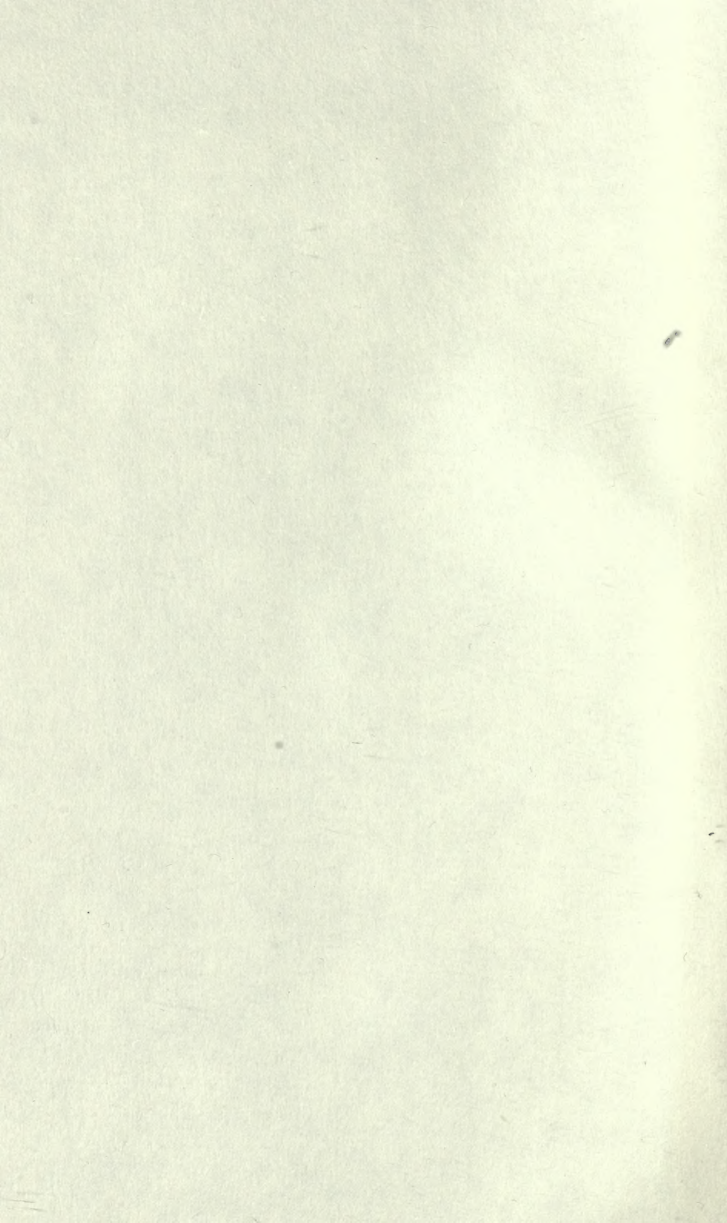
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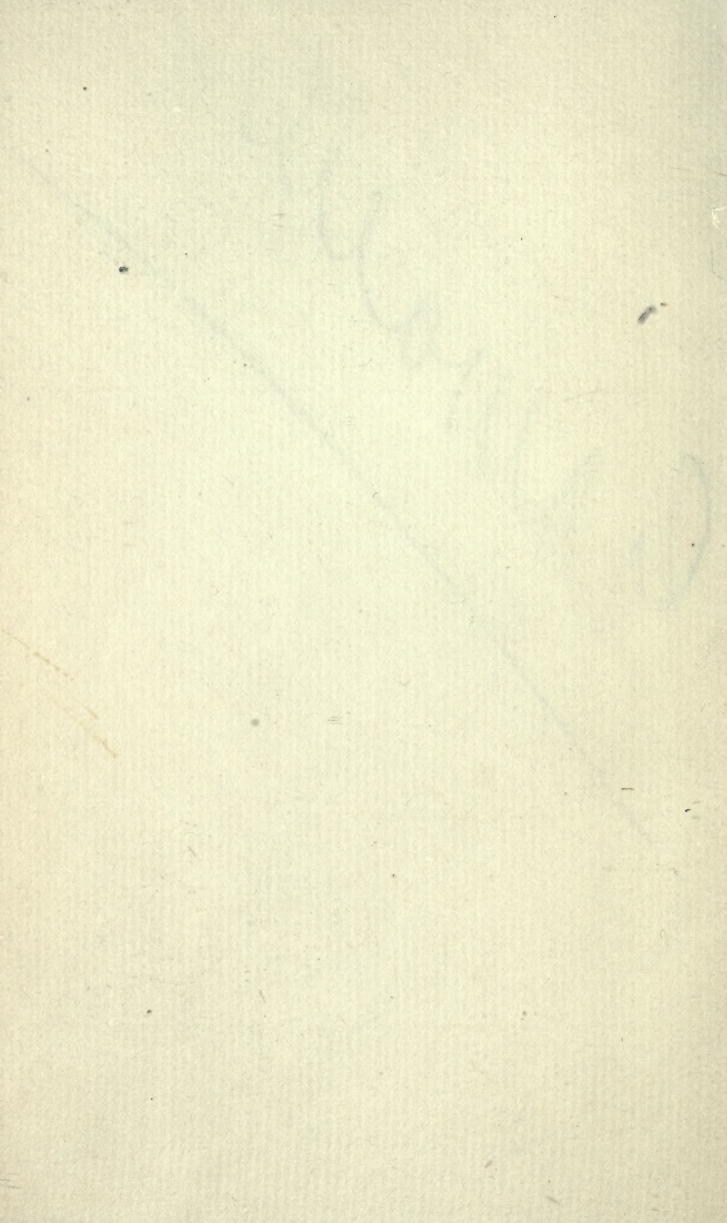




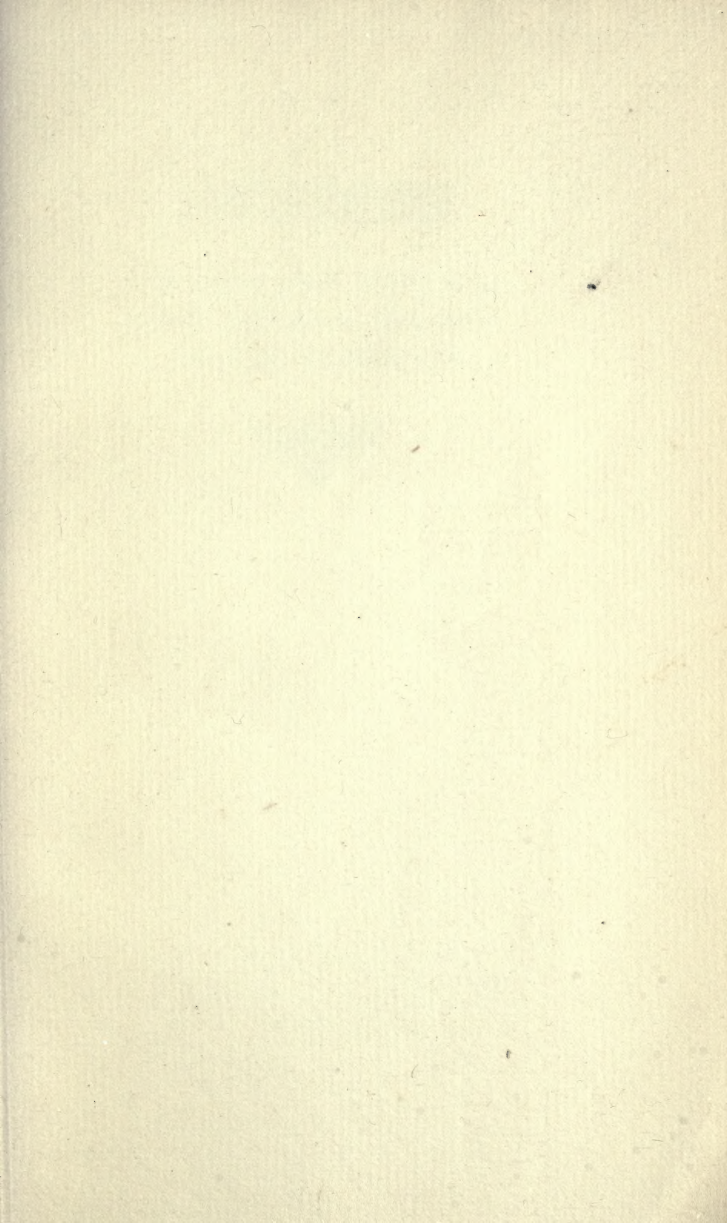




~~Lawrence~~











THE

ROMANCES AND RHYTHMS  
AND ARABIAN NIGHTS  
ENTERTAINMENTS







RHYMES AND RHYTHMS  
AND ARABIAN NIGHTS'  
ENTERTAINMENTS





# THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
BY  
JOHN H. COLEMAN



RHYMES AND RHYTHMS  
AND ARABIAN NIGHTS'  
ENTERTAINMENTS  
BY WILLIAM ERNEST  
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## RHYMES AND RHYTHMS



1889-1892

# MEMORANDUM

TO : THE PRESIDENT



## PROLOGUE

SOMETHING is dead . . .

*The grace of sunset solitudes, the march  
Of the solitary moon, the pomp and power  
Of round on round of shining soldier-stars  
Patrolling space, the bounties of the sun —  
Sovran, tremendous, unimaginable —  
The multitudinous friendliness of the sea,  
Possess no more — no more.*

Something is dead . . .

*The autumn rain-rot deeper and wider soaks  
And spreads, the burden of winter heavier weighs,  
His melancholy close and closer yet  
Cleaves, and those incantations of the Spring  
That made the heart a centre of miracles  
Grow formal, and the wonder-working hours  
Arise no more — no more.*

Something is dead . . .

*'Tis time to creep in close about the fire  
And tell grey tales of what we were, and dream  
Old dreams and faded, and as we may rejoice  
In the young life that round us leaps and laughs,  
A fountain in the sunshine, in the pride  
Of God's best gift that to us twain returns,  
Dear Heart, no more — no more.*







I



HERE forlorn sunsets flare and fade  
On desolate sea and lonely sand,  
Out of the silence and the shade  
What is the voice of strange com-  
mand

Calling you still, as friend calls friend  
With love that cannot brook delay,  
To rise and follow the ways that wend  
Over the hills and far away?

Hark in the city, street on street  
A roaring reach of death and life,  
Of vortices that clash and fleet  
And ruin in appointed strife,  
Hark to it calling, calling clear,  
Calling until you cannot stay  
From dearer things than your own most dear  
Over the hills and far away.

Out of the sound of the ebb-and-flow,  
Out of the sight of lamp and star,  
It calls you where the good winds blow,  
And the unchanging meadows are :  
From faded hopes and hopes agleam,  
It calls you, calls you night and day  
Beyond the dark into the dream  
Over the hills and far away.



## II

TO R. F. B.

WE are the Choice of the Will: God,  
when He gave the word  
That called us into line, set in our hand a  
sword;

Set us a sword to wield none else could lift  
and draw,  
And bade us forth to the sound of the trumpet  
of the Law.

East and west and north, wherever the battle  
grew,  
As men to a feast we fared, the work of the  
Will to do.

Bent upon vast beginnings, bidding anarchy  
cease —  
(Had we hacked it to the Pit, we had left it a  
place of peace!) —

Marching, building, sailing, pillar of cloud or  
fire,  
Sons of the Will, we fought the fight of the  
Will, our sire.

Road was never so rough that we left its purpose dark ;  
Stark was ever the sea, but our ships were yet more stark ;

We tracked the winds of the world to the steps of their very thrones ;  
The secret parts of the world were salted with our bones ;

Till now the name of names, England, the name of might,  
Flames from the austral bounds to the ends of the boreal night ;

And the call of her morning drum goes in a girdle of sound,  
Like the voice of the sun in song, the great globe round and round ;

And the shadow of her flag, when it shouts to the mother-breeze,  
Floats from shore to shore of the universal seas ;

And the loneliest death is fair with a memory of her flowers,  
And the end of the road to Hell with the sense of her dews and showers !

Who says that we shall pass, or the fame of us  
fade and die,  
While the living stars fulfil their round in the  
living sky?

For the sire lives in his sons, and they pay their  
father's debt,  
And the Lion has left a whelp wherever his claw  
was set;

And the Lion in his whelps, his whelps that  
none shall brave,  
Is but less strong than Time and the great, all-  
whelming Grave.

### III

**A** DESOLATE shore,  
The sinister seduction of the Moon,  
The menace of the irreclaimable Sea.

Flaunting, tawdry and grim,  
From cloud to cloud along her beat,  
Leering her battered and inveterate leer,  
She signals where he prowls in the dark alone,  
Her horrible old man,  
Mumbling old oaths and warming  
His villainous old bones with villainous talk —  
The secrets of their grisly housekeeping  
Since they went out upon the pad  
In the first twilight of self-conscious Time :  
Growling, hideous and hoarse,  
Tales of unnumbered Ships,  
Goodly and strong, Companions of the Advance,  
In some vile alley of the night  
Waylaid and bludgeoned —  
Dead.

Deep cellared in primeval ooze,  
Ruined, dishonoured, spoiled,  
They lie where the lean water-worm  
Crawls free of their secrets, and their broken sides

Bulge with the slime of life. Thus they abide,  
Thus fouled and desecrate,  
The summons of the Trumpet, and the while  
These Twain, their murderers,  
Unravined, imperturbable, unsubdued,  
Hang at the heels of their children — She aloft  
As in the shining streets,  
He as in ambush at some accomplice door.

The stalwart Ships,  
The beautiful and bold adventurers !  
Stationed out yonder in the isle,  
The tall Policeman,  
Flashing his bull's-eye, as he peers  
About him in the ancient vacancy,  
Tells them this way is safety — this way home.



#### IV

**I**T came with the threat of a waning moon  
And the wail of an ebbing tide,  
But many a woman has lived for less,  
And many a man has died ;  
For life upon life took hold and passed,  
Strong in a fate set free,  
Out of the deep into the dark  
On for the years to be.

Between the gloom of a waning moon  
And the song of an ebbing tide,  
Chance upon chance of love and death  
Took wing for the world so wide.  
Leaf out of leaf is the way of the land,  
Wave out of wave of the sea  
And who shall reckon what lives may live  
In the life that we bade to be?

V

WHY, my heart, do we love her so?  
(Geraldine, Geraldine!)

Why does the great sea ebb and flow? —

Why does the round world spin?

Geraldine, Geraldine,

Bid me my life renew,

What is it worth unless I win,

Love — love and you?

Why, my heart, when we speak her name  
(Geraldine, Geraldine!)

Throbs the word like a flinging flame? —

Why does the Spring begin?

Geraldine, Geraldine,

Bid me indeed to be,

Open your heart and take us in,

Love — love and me.

## VI

ONE with the ruined sunset,  
The strange forsaken sands,  
What is it waits and wanders  
And signs with desperate hands?

What is it calls in the twilight —  
Calls as its chance were vain?  
The cry of a gull sent seaward  
Or the voice of an ancient pain?

The red ghost of the sunset,  
It walks them as its own,  
These dreary and desolate reaches . . .  
But O, that it walked alone !

## VII

THERE 'S a regret  
So grinding, so immitigably sad,  
Remorse thereby feels tolerant, even glad. . . .  
Do you not know it yet?

For deeds undone  
Rankle and snarl and hunger for their due,  
Till there seems naught so despicable as you  
In all the grin o' the sun.

Like an old shoe  
The sea spurns and the land abhors, you lie  
About the beach of Time, till by and by  
Death, that derides you too —

Death, as he goes  
His ragman's round, espies you, where you stray,  
With half-an-eye, and kicks you out of his way ;  
And then — and then, who knows

But the kind Grave  
Turns on you, and you feel the convict Worm,  
In that black bridewell working out his term,  
Hanker and grope and crave?

“ Poor fool that might —  
That might, yet would not, dared not, let this be,  
Think of it, here and thus made over to me  
In the implacable night ! ”

And writhing, fain  
And like a triumphing lover, he shall take  
His fill where no high memory lives to make,  
His obscene victory vain.



## VIII

TO A. J. H.

**T**IME and the Earth —  
The old Father and Mother —  
Their teeming accomplished,  
Their purpose fulfilled,  
Close with a smile  
For a moment of kindness  
Ere for the winter they settle to sleep.

Failing yet gracious,  
Slow pacing, soon homing,  
A patriarch that strolls  
Through the tents of his children,  
The Sun, as he journeys  
His round on the lower  
Ascents of the blue,  
Washes the roofs  
And the hillsides with clarity ;  
Charms the dark pools  
Till they break into pictures ;  
Scatters magnificent  
Alms to the beggar trees ;  
Touches the mist-folk  
That crowd to his escort

Into translucencies  
Radiant and ravishing,  
As with the visible  
Spirit of Summer  
Gloriously vaporised,  
Visioned in gold.

Love, though the fallen leaf  
Mark, and the fleeting light  
And the loud, loitering  
Footfall of darkness  
Sign to the heart  
Of the passage of destiny,  
Here is the ghost  
Of a summer that lived for us,  
Here is a promise  
Of summers to be.

## IX

“AS like the Woman as you can” —  
(*Thus the New Adam was beguiled*) —

“So shall you touch the Perfect Man” —  
(*God in the Garden heard and smiled*).

“Your father perished with his day :  
A clot of passions fierce and blind  
He fought, he hacked, he crushed his way :  
Your muscles, Child, must be of mind.

“The Brute that lurks and irks within,  
How, till you have him gagged and bound,  
Escape the foulest form of Sin?”  
(*God in the Garden laughed and frowned*).

“So vile, so rank, the bestial mood  
In which the race is bid to be,  
It wrecks the Rarer Womanhood :  
Live, therefore, you, for Purity !

“Take for your mate no gallant croup,  
No girl all grace and natural will :  
To work her mission were to stoop  
Maybe to lapse, from Well to Ill.  
Choose one of whom your grosser make” —  
(*God in the Garden laughed outright*) —

"The true refining touch may take  
Till both attain to Life's last height.

"There, equal, purged of soul and sense,  
Beneficent, high-thinking, just,  
Beyond the appeal of Violence,  
Incapable of common Lust,  
In mental Marriage still prevail" —  
(*God in the Garden hid His face*) —  
"Till you achieve that Female-Male  
In Which shall culminate the race."

## X

**M**IDSUMMER midnight skies,  
 Midsummer midnight influences and airs,  
 The shining, sensitive silver of the sea  
 Touched with the strange-hued blazonings of  
     dawn :  
 And all so solemnly still I seem to hear  
 The breathing of Life and Death,  
 The secular Accomplices,  
 Renewing the visible miracle of the world.

The wistful stars  
 Shine like good memories.   The young morn-  
     ing wind  
 Blows full of unforgotten hours  
 As over a region of roses.   Life and Death  
 Sound on—sound on. . . . And the night  
     magical,  
 Troubled yet comforting, thrills  
 As if the Enchanted Castle at the heart  
 Of the wood's dark wonderment  
 Swung wide his valves, and filled the dim sea-  
     banks  
 With exquisite visitants :  
 Words fiery-hearted yet, dreams and desires  
 With living looks intolerable, regrets



Whose voice comes as the voice of an only child  
Heard from the grave: shapes of a Might-  
Have-Been —

Beautiful, miserable, distraught —

The Law no man may baffle denied and slew.

The spell-bound ships stand as at gaze  
To let the marvel by. The grey road glooms. . .  
Glimmers . . . goes out . . . and there, O,  
there where it fades,

What grace, what glamour, what wild will,  
Transfigure the shadows? Whose,  
Heart of my heart, Soul of my soul, but yours?

Ghosts — ghosts — the sapphirine air  
Teems with them even to the gleaming ends  
Of the wild day-spring! Ghosts,  
Everywhere — everywhere — till I and you  
At last — dear love, at last! —  
Are in the dreaming, even as Life and Death,  
Twin-ministers of the unoriginal Will.

## XI

**G**ULLS in an aëry morrice  
Gleam and vanish and gleam . . .  
The full sea, sleepily basking,  
Dreams under skies of dream.

Gulls in an aëry morrice  
Circle and swoop and close . . .  
Fuller and ever fuller  
The rose of the morning blows.

Gulls, in an aëry morrice  
Frolicking, float and fade . . .  
O, the way of a bird in the sunshine,  
The way of a man with a maid !

## XII

SOME starlit garden grey with dew,  
Some chamber flushed with wine and fire,  
What matters where, so I and you  
Are worthy our desire?

Behind, a past that scolds and jeers  
For ungirt loins and lamps unlit;  
In front the unmanageable years,  
The trap upon the Pit;

Think on the shame of dreams for deeds,  
The scandal of unnatural strife,  
The slur upon immortal needs,  
The treason done to life :

Arise ! no more a living lie,  
And with me quicken and control  
Some memory that shall magnify  
The universal Soul.

### XIII

#### TO JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER

UNDER a stagnant sky,  
Gloom out of gloom uncoiling into gloom,  
The River, jaded and forlorn,  
Welters and wanders wearily — wretchedly — on ;  
Yet in and out among the ribs  
Of the old skeleton bridge, as in the piles  
Of some dead lake-built city, full of skulls,  
Worm-worn, rat-riddled, mouldy with memories,  
Lingers to babble to a broken tune  
(Once, O, the unvoiced music of my heart !)  
So melancholy a soliloquy  
It sounds as it might tell  
The secret of the unending grief-in-grain,  
The terror of Time and Change and Death,  
That wastes this floating, transitory world.

What of the incantation  
That forced the huddled shapes on yonder shore  
To take and wear the night  
Like a material majesty ?  
That touched the shafts of wavering fire  
About this miserable welter and wash —  
(River, O River of Journeys, River of Dreams ! ) —

Into long, shining signals from the panes  
Of an enchanted pleasure-house  
Where life and life might live life lost in life  
For ever and evermore?

O Death! O Change! O Time!  
Without you, O, the insufferable eyes  
Of these poor Might-Have-Beens,  
These fatuous, ineffectual Yesterdays!



## XIV

TO J. A. C.

**F**RESH from his fastnesses  
Wholesome and spacious,  
The North Wind, the mad huntsman,  
Halloas on his white hounds  
Over the grey, roaring  
Reaches and ridges,  
The forest of ocean,  
The chace of the world.  
Hark to the peal  
Of the pack in full cry,  
As he thongs them before him,  
Swarming voluminous,  
Weltering, wide-wallowing,  
Till in a ruining  
Chaos of energy,  
Hurled on their quarry,  
They crash into foam !

Old Indefatigable,  
Time's right-hand man, the sea  
Laughs as in joy  
From his millions of wrinkles :  
Laughs that his destiny,

Great with the greatness  
Of triumphing order,  
Shows as a dwarf  
By the strength of his heart  
And the might of his hands.

Master of masters,  
O maker of heroes,  
Thunder the brave,  
Irresistible message : —  
“Life is worth Living  
Through every grain of it,  
From the foundations  
To the last edge  
Of the cornerstone, death.”

YOU played and sang a snatch of song,  
 A song that all-too well we knew;  
 But whither had flown the ancient wrong;  
 And was it really I and you?  
 O, since the end of life's to live  
 And pay in pence the common debt,  
 What should it cost us to forgive  
 Whose daily task is to forget?

You babbled in the well-known voice —  
 Not new, not new the words you said.  
 You touched me off that famous poise,  
 That old effect, of neck and head.  
 Dear, was it really you and I?  
 In truth the riddle's ill to read,  
 So many are the deaths we die  
 Before we can be dead indeed.

## XVI

SPACE and dread and the dark —  
Over a livid stretch of sky  
Cloud-monsters crawling, like a funeral train  
Of huge, primeval presences  
Stooping beneath the weight  
Of some enormous, rudimentary grief;  
While in the haunting loneliness  
The far sea waits and wanders with a sound  
As of the trailing skirts of Destiny,  
Passing unseen  
To some immitigable end  
With her grey henchman, Death.

What larve, what spectre is this  
Thrilling the wilderness to life  
As with the bodily shape of Fear?  
What but a desperate sense,  
A strong foreboding of those dim,  
Interminable continents, forlorn  
And many-silenced, in a dusk  
Inviolable utterly, and dead  
As the poor dead it huddles and swarms and styes  
In hugger-mugger through eternity?

Life — life — let there be life !  
Better a thousand times the roaring hours  
When wave and wind,  
Like the Arch-Murderer in flight  
From the Avenger at his heel,  
Storm through the desolate fastnesses  
And wild waste places of the world !

Life — give me life until the end,  
That at the very top of being,  
The battle-spirit shouting in my blood,  
Out of the reddest hell of the fight  
I may be snatched and flung  
Into the everlasting lull,  
The immortal, incommunicable dream.

## XVII

### CARMEN PATIBULARE

TO H. S.

**T**REE, Old Tree of the Triple Crook  
And the rope of the Black Election,  
'Tis the faith of the Fool that a race you rule  
Can never achieve perfection :  
So "It's O, for the time of the new Sublime  
And the better than human way,  
When the Rat (poor beast) shall come to his own  
And the Wolf shall have his day!"

For Tree, Old Tree of the Triple Beam  
And the power of provocation,  
You have cockered the Brute with your dreadful fruit  
Till your thought is mere stupration :  
And "It's how should we rise to be pure and wise,  
And how can we choose but fall,  
So long as the Hangman makes us dread,  
And the Noose floats free for all?"

So Tree, Old Tree of the Triple Coign  
And the trick there's no recalling,



They will haggle and hew till they hack you through  
And at last they lay you sprawling :  
When " Hey ! for the hour of the race in flower  
And the long good-bye to sin !"  
And " Ho ! for the fires of Hell gone out  
For the want of keeping in !"

But Tree, Old Tree of the Triple Bough  
And the ghastly Dreams that tend you,  
Your growth began with the life of Man,  
And only his death can end you.  
They may tug in line at your hempen twine,  
They may flourish with axe and saw ;  
But your taproot drinks of the Sacred Springs  
In the living rock of Law.

And Tree, Old Tree of the Triple Fork,  
When the spent sun reels and blunders  
Down a welkin lit with the flare of the Pit  
As it seethes in spate and thunders,  
Stern on the glare of the tortured air  
Your lines august shall gloom,  
And your master-beam be the last thing whelmed  
In the ruining roar of Doom.

## XVIII

I. M.

MARGARET EMMA HENLEY

(1888-1894)

**W**HEN you wake in your crib,  
You, an inch of experience —  
Vaulted about  
With the wonder of darkness ;  
Wailing and striving  
To reach from your feebleness  
Something you feel  
Will be good to and cherish you,  
Something you know  
And can rest upon blindly :  
O, then a hand  
( Your mother's, your mother's ! )  
By the fall of its fingers  
All knowledge, all power to you,  
Out of the dreary,  
Discouraging strangenesses  
Comes to and masters you,  
Takes you, and lovingly  
Woos you and soothes you  
Back, as you cling to it,

Back to some comforting  
Corner of sleep.

So you wake in your bed,  
Having lived, having loved :  
But the shadows are there,  
And the world and its kingdoms  
Incredibly faded ;  
And you grope through the Terror  
Above you and under  
For the light, for the warmth,  
The assurance of life ;  
But the blasts are ice-born,  
And your heart is nigh burst  
With the weight of the gloom  
And the stress of your strangled  
And desperate endeavour :  
Sudden a hand —  
Mother, O Mother ! —  
God at His best to you,  
Out of the roaring,  
Impossible silences,  
Falls on and urges you,  
Mightily, tenderly,  
Forth, as you clutch at it,  
Forth to the infinite  
Peace of the Grave.

*October 1891.*

## XIX

I. M.

R. L. S.

(1850-1894)

O, TIME and Change, they range and range  
From sunshine round to thunder!—  
They glance and go as the great winds blow,  
And the best of our dreams drive under :  
For Time and Change estrange, estrange —  
And, now they have looked and seen us,  
O, we that were dear we are all-too near  
With the thick of the world between us.

O, Death and Time, they chime and chime  
Like bells at sunset falling!—  
They end the song, they right the wrong,  
They set the old echoes calling :  
For Death and Time bring on the prime  
Of God's own chosen weather,  
And we lie in the peace of the Great Release  
As once in the grass together.

*February 1891.*

## XX

THE shadow of Dawn ;  
Stillness and stars and over-mastering dreams  
Of Life and Death and Sleep ;  
Heard over gleaming flats, the old, unchanging sound  
Of the old, unchanging Sea.

My soul and yours —  
O, hand in hand let us fare forth, two ghosts,  
Into the ghostliness,  
The infinite and abounding solitudes,  
Beyond — O, beyond ! — beyond . . .

Here in the porch  
Upon the multitudinous silences  
Of the kingdoms of the grave,  
We twain are you and I — two ghosts Omnipotence  
Can touch no more . . . no more !

## XXI

WHEN the wind storms by with a shout,  
and the stern sea-caves  
Rejoice in the tramp and the roar of onsetting  
waves,  
Then, then, it comes home to the heart that the  
top of life  
Is the passion that burns the blood in the act  
of strife —  
Till you pity the dead down there in their quiet  
graves.

But to drowse with the fen behind and the fog  
before,  
When the rain-rot spreads and a tame sea  
mumbles the shore,  
Not to adventure, none to fight, no right and  
no wrong,  
Sons of the Sword heart-sick for a stave of your  
sire's old song —  
O, you envy the blessed dead that can live no  
more!



## XXII

TREES and the menace of night;  
Then a long, lonely, leaden mere  
Backed by a desolate fell,  
As by a spectral battlement; and then,  
Low-brooding, interpenetrating all,  
A vast, grey, listless, inexpressive sky,  
So beggared, so incredibly bereft  
Of starlight and the song of racing worlds,  
It might have bellied down upon the Void  
Where as in terror Light was beginning to be.

Hist! In the trees fulfilled of night  
(Night and the wretchedness of the sky)  
Is it the hurry of the rain?  
Or the noise of a drive of the Dead  
Streaming before the irresistible Will  
Through the strange dusk of this, the Debateable Land  
Between their place and ours?

Like the forgetfulness  
Of the work-a-day world made visible,  
A mist falls from the melancholy sky.  
A messenger from some lost and loving soul,  
Hopeless, far wandered, dazed  
Here in the provinces of life,

A great white moth fades miserably past.  
Thro' the trees in the strange dead night,  
Under the vast dead sky,  
Forgetting and forgot, a drift of Dead  
Sets to the mystic mere, the phantom fell,  
And the unimagined vastitudes beyond.

## XXIII

TO P. A. G.

**H**ERE they trysted, here they strayed  
In the leafage dewy and boon,  
Many a man and many a maid,  
And the morn was merry June.  
“Death is fleet, Life is sweet,”  
Sang the blackbird in the may ;  
And the hour with flying feet,  
While they dreamed, was yesterday.

Many a maid and many a man  
Found the leafage close and boon ;  
Many a destiny began —  
O, the morn was merry June !  
Dead and gone, dead and gone,  
(Hark the blackbird in the may !),  
Life and Death went hurrying on,  
Cheek on cheek — and where were they ?

Dust on dust engendering dust  
In the leafage fresh and boon,  
Man and maid fulfil their trust —  
Still the morn turns merry June.

## Mother Life, Father Death

(O, the blackbird in the may !),  
Each the other's breath for breath,  
Fleet the times of the world away.

## XXIV

TO A. C.

NOT to the staring Day,  
For all the importunate questionings he pursues  
In his big, violent voice,  
Shall those mild things of bulk and multitude,  
The Trees — God's sentinels  
Over His gift of live, life-giving air,  
Yield of their huge, unutterable selves.  
Midsummer-manifold, each one  
Voluminous, a labyrinth of life,  
They keep their greenest musings, and the dim dreams  
That haunt their leafier privacies,  
Dissembled, baffling the random gape-seed still  
With blank full-faces, or the innocent guile  
Of laughter flickering back from shine to shade,  
And disappearances of homing birds,  
And frolicsome freaks  
Of little boughs that frisk with little boughs.

But at the word  
Of the ancient, sacerdotal Night,  
Night of the many secrets, whose effect —  
Transfiguring, hierophantic, dread —  
Themselves alone may fully apprehend,  
They tremble and are changed :

In each, the uncouth individual soul  
Looms forth and glooms  
Essential, and, their bodily presences  
Touched with inordinate significance,  
Wearing the darkness like the livery  
Of some mysterious and tremendous guild,  
They brood — they menace — they appal ;  
Or the anguish of prophecy tears them, and they wring  
Wild hands of warning in the face  
Of some inevitable advance of doom ;  
Or, each to the other bending, beckoning, signing  
As in some monstrous market-place,  
They pass the news, these Gossips of the Prime,  
In that old speech their forefathers  
Learned on the lawns of Eden, ere they heard  
The troubled voice of Eve  
Naming the wondering folk of Paradise.

Your sense is sealed, or you should hear them tell  
The tale of their dim life, with all  
Its compost of experience : how the Sun  
Spreads them their daily feast,  
Sumptuous, of light, firing them as with wine ;  
Of the old Moon's fitful solicitude  
And those mild messages the Stars  
Descend in silver silences and dews ;  
Or what the sweet-breathing West,  
Wanton with wading in the swirl of the wheat,



Said, and their leafage laughed ;  
And how the wet-winged Angel of the Rain  
Came whispering . . . whispering ; and the  
    gifts of the Year —

The sting of the stirring sap  
Under the wizardry of the young-eyed Spring,  
Their summer amplitudes of pomp  
And rich autumnal melancholy, and the shrill,  
Embittered housewifery  
Of the lean Winter : all such things,  
And with them all the goodness of the Master  
Whose right hand blesses with increase and life,  
Whose left hand honours with decay and death.

Thus under the constraint of Night  
These gross and simple creatures,  
Each in his scores of rings, which rings are years,  
A servant of the Will !  
And God, the Craftsman, as He walks  
The floor of His workshop, hearkens, full of cheer  
In thus accomplishing  
The aims of His miraculous artistry.

## XXV

**W**HAT have I done for you,  
           England, my England?  
 What is there I would not do,  
           England, my own?  
 With your glorious eyes austere,  
 As the Lord were walking near,  
 Whispering terrible things and dear  
           As the Song on your bugles blown,  
           England —  
           Round the world on your bugles blown !

Where shall the watchful Sun,  
           England, my England,  
 Match the master-work you 've done,  
           England, my own?  
 When shall he rejoice agen  
 Such a breed of mighty men  
 As come forward, one to ten,  
           To the Song on your bugles blown,  
           England —  
           Down the years on your bugles blown ?

Ever the faith endures,  
           England, my England : —  
 "Take and break us : we are yours,  
           England, my own !

Life is good, and joy runs high  
Between English earth and sky :  
Death is death ; but we shall die  
    To the Song on your bugles blown,  
        England —  
    To the stars on your bugles blown !”

They call you proud and hard,  
    England, my England :  
You with worlds to watch and ward,  
    England, my own !  
You whose mailed hand keeps the keys  
Of such teeming destinies  
You could know nor dread nor ease  
    Were the Song on your bugles blown,  
        England,  
    Round the Pit on your bugles blown !

Mother of Ships whose might,  
    England, my England,  
Is the fierce old Sea's delight,  
    England, my own,  
Chosen daughter of the Lord,  
Spouse-in-Chief of the ancient sword,  
There's the menace of the Word  
    In the Song on your bugles blown,  
        England —  
    Out of heaven on your bugles blown !

## EPILOGUE

**T**HESE, to you now, O, more than ever now —  
Now that the Antient Enemy  
Has passed, and we, we two that are one, have seen  
A piece of perfect Life  
Turn to so ravishing a shape of Death  
The Arch-Discomforter might well have smiled  
In pity and pride,  
Even as he bore his lovely and innocent spoil  
From those home-kingdoms he left desolate !

Poor windlestraws  
On the great, sullen, roaring pool of Time  
And Chance and Change, I know !  
But they are yours, as I am, till we attain  
That end for which we make, we two that are one :  
A little, exquisite Ghost  
Between us, smiling with the serenest eyes  
Seen in this world, and calling, calling still  
In that clear voice whose infinite subtleties  
Of sweetness, thrilling back across the grave,  
Break the poor heart to hear : —

“Come, Dadsie, come !  
Mama, how long — how long !”

July 1897.





ARABIAN NIGHTS'  
ENTERTAINMENTS

(To Elizabeth Robins Pennell.)









*"O mes chères Mille et Une Nuits!"* — FANTASIO.



NCE on a time  
There was a little boy : a master-mage  
By virtue of a Book  
Of magic — O, so magical it filled  
His life with visionary pomps  
Processional ! And Powers  
Passed with him where he passed. And Thrones  
And Dominations, glaived and plumed and mailed,  
Thronged in the criss-cross streets,  
The palaces pell-mell with playing-fields,  
Domes, cloisters, dungeons, caverns, tents, arcades,  
Of the unseen, silent City, in his soul  
Pavilioned jealously, and hid  
As in the dusk, profound,  
Green stillnesses of some enchanted mere. — — —

I shut mine eyes. . . . And lo !  
A flickering snatch of memory that floats  
Upon the face of a pool of darkness five  
And thirty dead years deep,

Antic in girlish broideries  
 And skirts and silly shoes with straps  
 And a broad-ribanded leghorn, he walks  
 Plain in the shadow of a church  
 (St. Michael's: in whose brazen call  
 To curfew his first wails of wrath were whelmed )  
 Sedate for all his haste  
 To be at home ; and, nestled in his arm,  
 Inciting still to quiet and solitude,  
 Boarded in sober drab,  
 With small, square, agitating cuts  
 Let in a-top of the double-columned, close,  
 Quakerlike print, a Book ! . . .  
 What but that blessed brief  
 Of what is gallantest and best  
 In all the full-shelved Libraries of Romance?  
 The Book of rocs,  
 Sandalwood, ivory, turbans, ambergris,  
 Cream-tarts, and lettered apes, and calendars,  
 And ghouls, and genies — O, so huge  
 They might have overed the tall Minster Tower  
 Hands down, as schoolboys take a post !  
 In truth, the Book of Camaralzaman,  
 Schemselnihar and Sindbad, Scheherezade  
 The peerless, Bedreddin, Badroulbador,  
 Cairo and Serendib and Candahar,  
 And Caspian, and the dim, terrific bulk —  
 Ice-ribbed, fiend-visited, isled in spells and storms —

Of Kaf! . . . That centre of miracles,  
The sole, unparalleled Arabian Nights!

Old friends I had a-many — kindly and grim  
Familiars, cronies quaint  
And goblin! Never a Wood but housed  
Some morrice of dainty dapperlings. No Brook  
But had his nunnery  
Of green-haired, silvry-curving sprites,  
To cabin in his grots, and pace  
His liliated margents. Every lone Hillside  
Might open upon Elf-Land. Every Stalk  
That curled about a Bean-stick was of the breed  
Of that live ladder by whose delicate rungs  
You climbed beyond the clouds, and found  
The Farm-House where the Ogre, gorged  
And drowsy, from his great oak chair,  
Among the fitches and pewters at the fire,  
Called for his Faëry Harp. And in it flew,  
And, perching on the kitchen table, sang  
Jocund and jubilant, with a sound  
Of those gay, golden-vowelled madrigals  
The shy thrush at mid-May  
Flutes from wet orchards flushed with the triumphing dawn;  
Or blackbirds rioting as they listened still,  
In old-world woodlands rapt with an old-world spring,  
For Pan's own whistle, savage and rich and lewd,  
And mocked him call for call!

I could not pass  
The half-door where the cobbler sat in view  
Nor figure me the wizen Leprechaun,  
In square-cut, faded reds and buckle-shoes,  
Bent at his work in the hedge-side, and know  
Just how he tapped his brogue, and twitched  
His wax-end this and that way, both with wrists  
And elbows. In the rich June fields,  
Where the ripe clover drew the bees,  
And the tall quakers trembled, and the West Wind  
Lolled his half-holiday away  
Beside me lolling and lounging through my own,  
'Twas good to follow the Miller's Youngest Son  
On his white horse along the leafy lanes ;  
For at his stirrup linked and ran,  
Not cynical and trapesing, as he loped  
From wall to wall above the espaliers,  
But in the bravest tops  
That market-town, a town of tops, could show :  
Bold, subtle, adventurous, his tail  
A banner flaunted in disdain  
Of human stratagems and shifts :  
King over All the Catlands, present and past  
And future, that moustached  
Artificer of fortunes, Puss-in-Boots !  
Or Bluebeard's Closet, with its plenishing  
Of meat-hooks, sawdust, blood,  
And wives that hung like fresh-dressed carcasses —

Odd-fangled, most a butcher's, part  
A faëry chamber hazily seen  
And hazily figured — on dark afternoons  
And windy nights was visiting of the best.  
Then, too, the pelt of hoofs  
Out in the roaring darkness told  
Of Herne the Hunter in his antlered helm  
Galloping, as with despatches from the Pit,  
Between his hell-born Hounds.  
And Rip Van Winkle . . . often I lurked to hear,  
Outside the long, low timbered, tarry wall,  
The mutter and rumble of the trolling bowls  
Down the lean plank before they fluttered the pins ;  
For, listening, I could help him play  
His wonderful game,  
In those blue, booming hills, with Mariners  
Refreshed from kegs not coopered in this our world.

But what were these so near,  
So neighbourly fancies to the spell that brought  
The run of Ali Baba's Cave  
Just for the saying "Open Sesame,"  
With gold to measure, peck by peck,  
In round, brown wooden stoups  
You borrowed at the chandler's? . . . Or one time  
Made you Aladdin's friend at school,  
Free of his Garden of Jewels, Ring and Lamp  
In perfect trim? . . . Or Ladies, fair



For all the embrowning scars in their white breasts,  
Went labouring under some dread ordinance  
Which made them whip, and bitterly cry the while,  
Strange Curs that cried as they,  
Till there was never a Black Bitch of all  
Your consorting but might have gone  
Spell-driven miserably for crimes  
Done in the pride of womanhood and desire . . .  
Or at the ghostliest altitudes of night,  
While you lay wondering and acold,  
Your sense was fearfully purged ; and soon  
Queen Labé, abominable and dear,  
Rose from your side, opened the Box of Doom,  
Scattered the yellow powder ( which I saw  
Like sulphur at the Docks in bulk ),  
And muttered certain words you could not hear ;  
And there ! a living stream,  
The brook you bathed in, with its weeds and flags  
And cresses, glittered and sang  
Out of the hearthrug over the nakedness,  
Fair-scrubbed and decent, of your bedroom floor ! . . .

I was — how many a time ! —  
That Second Calendar, Son of a King,  
On whom 'twas vehemently enjoined,  
Pausing at one mysterious door,  
To pry no closer but content his soul  
With his kind Forty. Yet I could not rest

For idleness and ungovernable Fate.  
And the Black Horse, which fed on sesame  
(That wonder-working word!),  
Vouchsafed his back to me, and spread his vans,  
And soaring, soaring on  
From air to air, came charging to the ground  
Sheer, like a lark from the midsummer clouds,  
And, shaking me out of the saddle, where I sprawled  
Flicked at me with his tail,  
And left me blinded, miserable, distraught  
(Even as I was in deed,  
When doctors came, and odious things were done  
On my poor tortured eyes  
With lancets; or some evil acid stung  
And wrung them like hot sand,  
And desperately from room to room  
Fumble I must my dark, disconsolate way),  
To get to Bagdad how I might. But there  
I met with Merry Ladies. O you three —  
Safie, Amine, Zobëidé — when my heart  
Forgets you all shall be forgot!  
And so we supped, we and the rest,  
On wine and roasted lamb, rose-water, dates,  
Almonds, pistachios, citrons. And Haroun  
Laughed out of his lordly beard  
On Giaffar and Mesrour (*I* knew the Three  
For all their Mossoul habits). And outside  
The Tigris, flowing swift



Like Severn bend for bend, twinkled and gleamed  
With broken and wavering shapes of stranger stars;  
The vast, blue night  
Was murmurous with peris' plumes  
And the leathern wings of genies; words of power  
Were whispering; and old fishermen,  
Casting their nets with prayer, might draw to shore  
Dead loveliness: or a prodigy in scales  
Worth in the Caliph's Kitchen pieces of gold:  
Or copper vessels, stopped with lead,  
Wherein some Squire of Eblis watched and railed,  
In durance under potent charactry  
Graven by the seal of Solomon the King. . . .

Then, as the Book was glassed  
In Life as in some olden mirror's quaint,  
Bewildering angles, so would Life  
Flash light on light back on the Book; and both  
Were changed. Once in a house decayed  
From better days, harbouring an errant show  
(For all its stories of dry-rot  
Were filled with gruesome visitants in wax,  
Inhuman, hushed, ghastly with Painted Eyes),  
I wandered; and no living soul  
Was nearer than the pay-box; and I stared  
Upon them staring — staring. Till at last,  
Three sets of rafters from the streets,  
I strayed upon a mildewed, rat-run room

With the two Dancers, horrible and obscene,  
Guarding the door : and there, in a bedroom-set,  
Behind a fence of faded crimson cords,  
With an aspect of frills  
And dimities and dishonoured privacy  
That made you hanker and hesitate to look,  
A Woman with her litter of Babes — all slain,  
All in their nightgowns, all with Painted Eyes  
Staring — still staring ; so that I turned and ran  
As for my neck, but in the street  
Took breath. The same, it seemed,  
And yet not all the same, I was to find,  
As I went up ! For afterwards,  
Whenas I went my round alone —  
All day alone — in long, stern, silent streets,  
Where I might stretch my hand and take  
Whatever I would : still there were Shapes of Stone,  
Motionless, lifelike, frightening — for the Wrath  
Had smitten them ; but they watched,  
This by her melons and figs, that by his rings  
And chains and watches, with the hideous gaze,  
The Painted Eyes insufferable,  
Now, of those grisly images ; and I  
Pursued my best-belovéd quest  
Thrilled with a novel and delicious fear.  
So the night fell — with never a lamplighter ;  
And through the Palace of the King  
I groped among the echoes, and I felt

That they were there,  
Dreadfully there, the Painted staring Eyes,  
Hall after hall . . . Till lo ! from far  
A Voice ! And in a little while  
Two tapers burning ! And the Voice  
Heard in the wondrous Word of God was — whose ?  
Whose but Zobëidé's,  
The lady of my heart, like me  
A True Believer, and like me  
An outcast thousands of leagues beyond the pale ! . . .

Or, sailing to the Isles  
Of Khaledan, I spied one evenfall  
A black blotch in the sunset ; and it grew  
Swiftly . . . and grew. Tearing their beards,  
The sailors wept and prayed ; but the grave ship,  
Deep laden with spiceries and pearls, went mad,  
Wrenched the long tiller out of the steersman's hand,  
And, turning broadside on,  
As the most iron would, was haled and sucked  
Nearer, and nearer yet ;  
And, all awash, with horrible lurching leaps  
Rushed at that Portent, casting a shadow now  
That swallowed sea and sky ; and then  
Anchors and nails and bolts  
Flew screaming out of her, and with clang on clang,  
A noise of fifty stithies, caught at the sides  
Of the Magnetic Mountain ; and she lay,

A broken bundle of firewood, strown piecemeal  
About the waters ; and her crew  
Passed shrieking, one by one ; and I was left  
To drown. All the long night I swam ;  
But in the morning, O, the smiling coast  
Tufted with date-trees, meadowlike,  
Skirted with shelving sands ! And a great wave  
Cast me ashore ; and I was saved alive.  
So, giving thanks to God, I dried my clothes,  
And, faring inland, in a desert place  
I stumbled on an iron ring —  
The fellow of fifty built into the Quays :  
When, scenting a trap-door,  
I dug, and dug ; until my biggest blade  
Stuck into wood. And then,  
The flight of smooth-hewn, easy-falling stairs  
Sunk in the naked rock ! The cool, clean vault,  
So neat with niche on niche it might have been  
Our beer-cellar but for the rows  
Of brazen urns ( like monstrous chemist's jars )  
Full to the wide, squat throats  
With gold-dust, but a-top  
A layer of pickled-walnut-looking things  
I knew for olives ! And far, O, far away,  
The Princess of China languished ! Far away  
Was marriage, with a Vizier and a Chief  
Of Eunuchs and the privilege  
Of going out at night

To play — unkennered, majestic, secure —  
Where the old, brown, friendly river shaped  
Like Tigris shore for shore ! Haply a Ghoul  
Sat in the churchyard under a frightened moon,  
A thighbone in his fist, and glared  
At supper with a Lady : she who took  
Her rice with tweezers grain by grain.  
Or you might stumble, there by the iron gates —  
Of the Pump Room — underneath the limes,  
Upon Bedreddin in his shirt and drawers,  
Just as the civil Genie laid him down.  
Or those red-curtained panes,  
Whence a tame cornet tenored it throatily  
Of beer-pots and spittoons and new long pipes,  
Might turn a caravansery's, wherein  
You found Nouredin Ali, loftily drunk,  
And that fair Persian, bathed in tears,  
You 'd not have given away  
For all the diamonds in the Vale Perilous  
You had that dark and disleaved afternoon  
Escaped on a roc's claw,  
Disguised like Sindbad — but in Christmas  
beef !

And all the blissful while  
The schoolboy satchel at your hip  
Was such a bulge of gems as should amaze  
Grey-whiskered chapmen drawn  
From over Caspian : yea, the Chief Jewellers



Of Tartary and the bazaars,  
Seething with traffic, of enormous Ind.— — —

Thus cried, thus called aloud, to the child heart  
The magian East : thus the child eyes  
Spelled out the wizard message by the light  
Of the sober, workaday hours

They saw, week in week out, pass, and still pass  
In the sleepy Minster City, folded kind  
In ancient Severn's arm,

Amongst her water-meadows and her docks  
Whose floating populace of ships —  
Galliot and luggers, light-heeled brigantines,  
Bluff barques and rake-hell fore-and-afters —  
brought

To her very doorsteps and geraniums  
The scents of the World's End ; the calls  
That may not be gainsaid to rise and ride  
Like fire on some high errand of the race ;  
The irresistible appeals

For comradeship that sound  
Steadily from the irresistible sea.

Thus the East laughed and whispered, and the  
tale,

Telling itself anew  
In terms of living, labouring life,  
Took on the colours, busked it in the wear  
Of life that lived and laboured ; and Romance,

The Angel-Playmate, raining down  
His golden influences  
On all I saw, and all I dreamed and did,  
Walked with me arm in arm,  
Or left me, as one bediademed with straws  
And bits of glass, to gladden at my heart  
Who had the gift to seek and feel and find  
His fiery-hearted presence everywhere.  
Even so dear Hesper, bringer of all good things,  
Sends the same silver dews  
Of happiness down her dim, delighted skies  
On some poor collier-hamlet — ( mound on mound  
Of sifted squalor; here a soot-throated stalk  
Sullenly smoking over a row  
Of flat-faced hovels; black in the gritty air  
A web of rails and wheels and beams; with strings  
Of hurtling, tipping trams ) —  
As on the amorous nightingales  
And roses of Shiraz, or the walls and towers  
Of Samarcand — the Ineffable — whence you espy  
The splendour of Ginnistan's embattled spears,  
Like listed lightnings.

Samarcand !

That name of names ! That star-vaned belvedere  
Builded against the Chambers of the South !  
That outpost on the Infinite !

And behold !

Questing therefrom, you knew not what wild tide



Might overtake you : for one fringe,  
One suburb, is stablished on firm earth ; but one  
Floats founded vague  
In lubberlands delectable — isles of palm  
And lotus, fortunate mains, far-shimmering seas,  
The promise of wistful hills —  
The shining, shifting Sovranties of Dream.



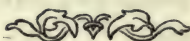


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B.M.  
24.02.84

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